Public Notice

Public Notice Number: 199900057
Date: November 18, 2002
Comments Due: December 18, 2002

US Army Corps of Engineers

Sacramento District
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

In reply, please refer to the Public Notice Number

SUBJECT: Application for a Department of the Army permit under authority of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act to construct an adjustable weir dam and fish passage immediately upstream of Woodbridge Dam in the Mokelumne River, as shown in the attached drawings.

APPLICANT: Anders Christensen
Woodbridge Irrigation District
18777 N. Lower Sacramento Road
Woodbridge, California 95258

LOCATION: The proposed Woodbridge Dam replacement and fisheries passage enhancement project is located in Woodbridge, Section 35, Township 4 North, Range 6 East, MDB&M, San Joaquin County, California.

PURPOSE: The applicant's stated purpose is to construct an adjustable weir dam and fish passage system to provide a constant operating water elevation and meet flow management requirements for fishery and irrigation uses. A diversion pipeline would be constructed so that fish passage would be improved while maintaining water rights for the Woodbridge Irrigation District.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Lower Mokelumne River project consists of five construction elements. The proposed project would cause a discharge of approximately 21,615 cubic yards of fill material. The project would permanently impact 1.23 acres of wetlands and waters and temporarily impact 7.97 acres of jurisdictional wetlands and waters. The fill materials include rock rip-rap, concrete, and soil.

The first element of the project consists of constructing an adjustable weir dam upstream of the existing dam and removing the flashboard buttress walls of the old dam. Low level, high level, and pool and chute fish ladders would be constructed during this phase of construction. These ladders would operate through a full range of water conditions. A small impoundment would be constructed immediately downstream of the new dam on the concrete base of the existing dam to create a small pool to reduce fish mortality. The dam construction would require the use of a trestle and a cofferdam to access and dewater the site. Construction element 1 would occur in two-phases. The first phase would include constructing the south half of the new dam, removing the existing facilities, and installing the fish ladders. Phase 2 would involve constructing the north half of the new dam, removing the old facilities, placing rip-rap, constructing the apron, and filling a scour hole.

The second element would consist of constructing a high-stage fish screen approximately 99 feet long at the entrance of Woodbridge canal. A 30-inch diameter bypass pipeline would be buried below the river bottom and would transport the fish attracted to the screen to the smolt trap or downstream of the dam. The last phase of element 2 is expanding the existing access area next to Woodbridge Canal to 150 feet X 200 feet and pave it.

The third element would consist of constructing a smolt trap, monitoring building, false weir ladder, and an adult fish trap.

The fourth element would consist of constructing a fish ladder counting and viewing building.

The fifth element would consist of constructing a low-stage fish screen and a 10-foot-diameter concrete pipeline that would extend 1800 feet from the Woodbridge canal entrance to the dam. The placement of the concrete pipe would temporarily impact approximately 0.25 acres of wetlands and temporarily impact 0.11 acres of waters. A 20-foot wide access road would be constructed over a 1000-foot portion of the concrete pipeline. The road would permanently impact approximately 0.46 acres of wetlands. The irrigation district plans to divert 200 cfs through this pipeline until approximately June 1 of each year. The last project under element 5 is to place 430 linear feet of rip-rap upstream of the dam along the river bank.

AREA DESCRIPTION: The existing Woodbridge Dam is a 12-foot-tall flashboard dam. The 46.65 acre site contains a large riparian wetland system. The area includes annual grasslands, open water, marshlands, and riparian forest, including willow and blackberry shrub areas.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The agent has stated that the Bureau of Reclamation is the lead federal agency for this project. As the lead federal agency the Bureau of Reclamation will insure the work complies with the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and any other applicable federal laws. This authorization is contingent upon the permittee implementing all actions necessary to comply with these requirements.

The Bureau of Reclamation has submitted a report to the State Historic Preservation Officer to verify that none of the cultural resources identified within the area of potential effect meet the criteria for listing under the National Historical Preservation Act.

The agent has informed the Corps that the Bureau of Reclamation has initiated consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act on the following endangered species: giant garter snake *Thamnophis gigas,* Sacramento splittail *Pogonichthys macrolepidotus,* Central Valley steelhead *Oncorhynchus mykiss,* and chinook salmon *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*.

The District Engineer has made this determination based on information provided by the applicant and on the Corps' preliminary investigation.

Interested parties are invited to submit written comments on or before **December 18, 2002**. Personal information in comment letters is subject to release to the public through the Freedom of Information Act. Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

If additional information is required, please contact Woodbridge Irrigation District, telephone 209-369-6808, or Mr. Paul Maniccia, at the letterhead address, telephone 916-557-6704.

Michael J. Conrad, Jr.
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer

Enclosures: Drawings